



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Rural Development Reaffirms Commitment To Housing Needs

Salina, KS – USDA Rural Development State Director Chuck Banks, presenting the keynote address to the annual Rural Rental Housing Association of Kansas (RRHAK) Conference in Salina, confirmed the commitment of the Agency to educate the public and to help provide affordable housing to Kansas rural citizens.

At the RRHAK Conference, State Director Banks commented, "Individuals and families with low to moderate incomes often encounter difficulties securing safe and affordable housing in rural areas. USDA Rural Development has a long history of providing funding assistance to improve affordable housing opportunities, and the Agency will continue to provide funding and technical assistance support to achieve this important goal through the *Multi-Family Housing Programs*."

USDA Rural Development provides funding for 377 *Multi-Family Housing Program* complexes in 97 Kansas counties and administers over \$80 million annually through the Agency's Multi-Family and Single-Family housing programs.

Banks further stated to the Conference attendees, "I encourage income disadvantaged individuals and families to explore all housing opportunities offered by USDA Rural Development, including becoming individual homeowners, to assist in improving their living lifestyle. I also encourage the existing partnerships between USDA Rural Development, private lenders, and public agencies, to reach as many individuals and families as possible to help them realize a housing solution to meet or improve their essential living needs."

USDA Rural Development announced during the conference that four "Site Manager of the Year" winners have been submitted for National competition. Those winners are: John Merchant, Pemberton Village I & II in Hiawatha, Kansas as "Overall Site Manager of the Year"; LoRetta Riddiough, Parkview Apartments, Leota, Kansas as "Outstanding Marketing Techniques Site Manager of the Year"; Elsie Nichols, Magic Circle I & II and Eureka Apartments, Eureka, Kansas as "Most Challenged Site Manager of the Year"; and Brette Province, Elm Grove Apartments, Ashland, Kansas as "Outstanding Achievement Site Manager of the Year".

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. As a venture capital entity, USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. During Fiscal Year 2005, USDA Rural Development delivered nearly \$235 million in community and economic development programming benefiting Kansas. For additional information regarding USDA Rural Development and its programs, log onto the Agency's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks or call the Agency's state office at 785-271-2700.

USDA Rural Development – *Committed to the Future of Rural Communities.*

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